



**How will you prioritise empowering young people to volunteer and take social action?**

We will ensure that all we offer and provide via our volunteering service is as accessible as it can be, and designed by and with young people. We value the contribution that our young volunteers make hugely and want to do everything we can to enhance their volunteering experience. We will advertise widely, working with 3rd sector partners and agencies to ensure we reach as many young people as possible.

**How will you open up your decision-making structures?**

We have created a Youth Ambassadors group, who are consulted on all things volunteering, they give feedback on every major change we make as a team, from Uniform Policy, to Training, to recruitment and advertising. This group continues to run and it is represented at our NHS Lothian Strategic group as well.

**How will you work in partnership with young people?**

As above, we work collaboratively with young people to ensure what we are delivering is suited to their needs. Each individual young person that volunteers with us, will have 121 coaching as they commence their journey. We will work with them to ensure where and when they volunteer, and what they do is suitable for them. We will never place a young person somewhere where they are not comfortable.

**How will evidence the benefits of youth social action?**

We report both qualitatively and quantitatively about our young volunteers. Not only do we look at the numbers of young people involved, and their demographics, we also work on an individual basis to see how they are personally getting on. Young people volunteering through the Specialist Youth Programme will evaluate their progress throughout their journey so we can track improvements in things like self-esteem, confidence, connectedness to community etc. We will also work with staff and patients to gain feedback on the difference our young volunteers are making to the lives of patients in hospital.

**How will you recognise and celebrate young people's impact?**

We will ensure that we aim to thank our volunteers as much as is possible. We work with Young Scot and our volunteers are able to get reward points for what they do in hospitals. We are also accredited activity providers with Duke of Edinburgh and will write assessors reports regularly, we also support young people to access a Saltire Award. During Volunteers week, we always have a focus on the difference our young volunteers are making, and will aim to thank them, via events and a thank you card in the post. At the end of year similarly, we will thank them with events and letters to their houses. In addition to all of the above, we will support and encourage young people to take their next steps, either by writing job references, personal statement support for uni/college and also helping them look into the NHS for work if they wish.